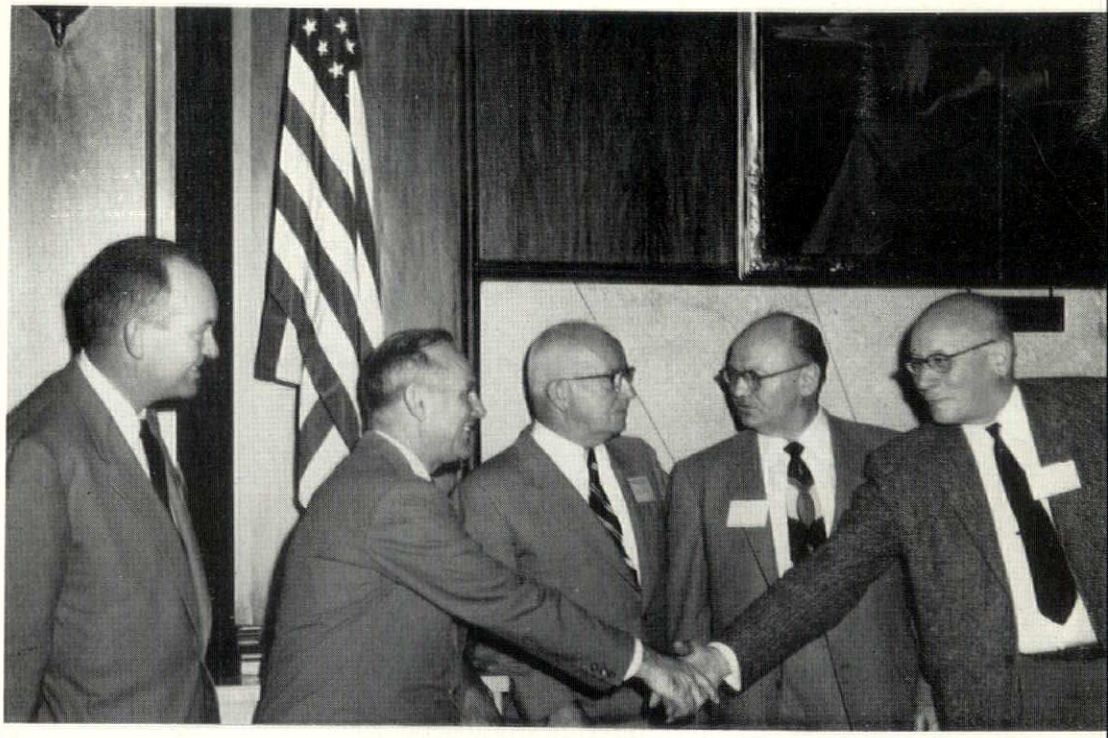
October 1954

the Wisconsin Architect



Regional Conference

Editor's Note

Do you remember when your first baby was born? You wondered how it was going to look, what sort of noises it was going to make. Would your friends admire it? We feel much the same way about the new Wisconsin Architect which begins with this issue.

Although this magazine, strictly speaking, is not new, having a reputation of 22 years of service to Wisconsin architects under Leigh Hunt and Elizabeth Scott Hunt, the present editor and the committee to which he reports now are responsible for the first time for its production.

(Continued on Page 7)

ON THE COVER

Edgar H. Berners, Green Bay, North Central States Regional Director congratulates Thomas Ellerbe, Minneapolis, Program Chairman of the North Central States Regional Conference in Minnesota for the excellent program prepared for conferees. Left to right are: Julius Sandstedt, President, Wisconsin Architects Association; Berners; Buckminster Fuller, Conference principle speaker; S. L. Stolte, President of the Minneapolis Chapter; and Ellerbe.

THE WISCONSIN ARCHITECT
Volume 22, No. 10
Official Publication of
Wisconsin Architects Association
N. J. Russell, Jr., Editor and Publisher
Published Monthly
Subscription, $1.00 per year
Business and Editorial Offices
828 N. Broadway, Milwaukee 2, BRoadway 2-0822

To fill you in . . . .

Honor Award Judging Slated for January

"Early January will be the judging time for the Biennial Honor Awards Competition," warned Mark Purcell, Chairman of the Exhibitions and Honor Awards Committee.

Purcell emphasized the need for all architects desiring to enter the Competition to have their photographs taken as soon as possible.

At recent committee meetings (see Lens Lineup, the new picture page), the Committee has worked earnestly to provide a program which should attract a large number of entries. Plans are underway for procurement of a jury of high caliber. All instructions to competitors will be designed in such fashion that a minimum of modification of his exhibit will be needed for the competitor to enter the comparable Institute competition which occurs later in the Spring.

Details of the Wisconsin competition will be send to all Corporate members of the Association shortly.

Area Army, Navy Units Have Scant Information On New Housing Plan

A new 175 million dollar military housing program recently authorized by Congress is called to the attention of architects throughout the country by the A.I.A. publication "MEMO" of September 6, 1954. The article states twenty-five architectural-engineering firms from various parts of the country will be commissioned for twenty-five pilot projects and firms wishing to be considered in this connection should get in touch with their "Naval District Public Works Officer or Corps of Engineers district office where final selections will be made and contracts negotiated."

Inquiries by the W.A.A. office directed to the Ninth Naval District at Great Lakes, Illinois, the North Central Division Corps of Engineers Office in Chicago and the Milwaukee District Corps of Engineers Office reveal little further information about this project.

The Corps of Engineers states its "part in this program has not been defined." The Ninth Naval District Public Works office reports it has not received sufficient information to know the scope of the program and locations involved. Further, it indicates a belief the program will not be particularly active in this area.

The W.A.A. office is keeping in touch with the Milwaukee Corps of Engineers and will advise members of the Association immediately upon receipt of any details regarding location of the pilot projects and/or instructions to those interested in negotiating contracts.

PR Chairman Urges Extensive Use of New Speakers Kit

Maynard W. Meyer, chairman of the Public Relations Committee, announced the receipt from the A.I.A. of a "Speakers Kit for Architects". Meyer urged that W.A.A. members planning speeches become acquainted with this Kit and remarked, "It should prove invaluable in our constant effort to increase public acceptance of the architect's indispensable role in today's building expansion."

The Kit contains flexible outlines keyed to five general audiences, (a) Church Groups, (b) School Boards, (c) Industrial Groups, (d) Banking Groups, (e) General Public; and is designed to be a framework for speeches permitting use of anecdotes and localized architectural examples.

It is now available, along with publicity suggestions and assistance, from the W.A.A. office, 828 N. Broadway, Room 207.

A regular W.A.A. Speakers Bureau will be established and a later issue of the Wisconsin Architect will provide details.

To fill you in . . . .

1955 Convention Plans to be Announced Soon

Plans for the 1955 Convention of the Wisconsin Architects Association are proceeding rapidly. The Convention will be held at the Pfister Hotel on February 10, 11 and 12, 1955.

A new plan for arrangement and handling of exhibit space is under discussion and will be announced in the near future. The planned speakers are expected to be men of nationwide repute whose acceptances are expected soon.

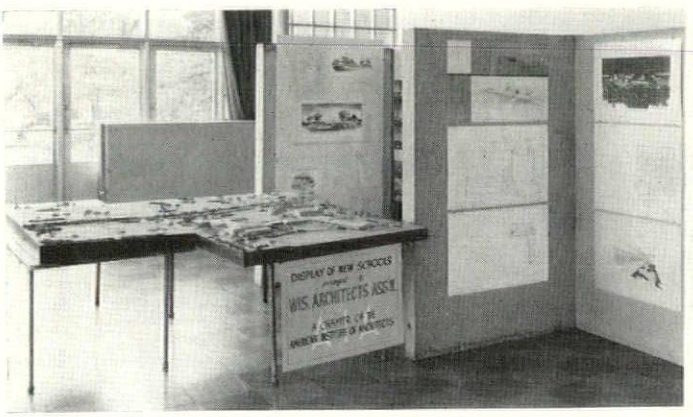
It is anticipated the Convention's theme and a list of the seminars' topics will be available shortly. Convention Chairman, Roger Herbst, and his committee members have issued a strong plea for the cooperation of all architectural offices in aiding the younger men of their office to attend the Convention. Every effort is being made to hold down Convention costs to assist in this regard, according to Herbst.

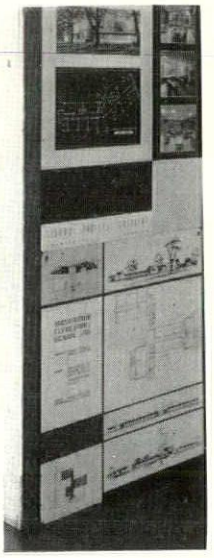
State Building Code Revision Now Available

C. J. Caddell, Building Engineer for the Industrial Commission in a recent interview in his Madison office called attention to a revised Building Code published in August, 1954. The revision costs 50 cents and may be obtained from the Bureau of Purchases, State Capitol, Madison, Wisconsin.

Caddell also traced the following procedure for making amendments to the code:

1. A Special Advisory Committee draws up the proposed amendment and forwards it to the Building Engineer and other interested officials.
2. Public hearings are held in several cities to obtain a representative state-wide opinion.
3. The Special Advisory Committee considers data gathered at the hearings, prepares a final draft and sends it to the
4. Industrial Commission which approves, rejects or returns the draft to the Committee for further study.
5. When the draft of the amendment is approved, it is sent to the official state newspaper (the Wisconsin State Journal) for one publication. It becomes effective 30 days thereafter.
6. The amendment is then printed and available free of charge from the Industrial Commission, (except in the case of reprint of the entire Building Code, when copies are obtainable from the Bureau of Purchases for 50 cents.)





The product of members of the Wisconsin Architects Association was on display in Madison at the Wisconsin Annual Joint Conference of School Administrators and Superintendents. Shown above is a portion of the exhibit prepared by the Exhibitions and Honor Awards Committee which generated considerable enthusiasm in school heads attending the conference.

Architects Foundation Plans Meeting Soon

A meeting of the Wisconsin Architects Foundation will be called soon, President Jack Rose stated recently. Plans for increasing the Foundation's funds which will be available for grants next Spring will be discussed.

"The initial response to our suggestions for sustaining memberships by architects and their friends interested in assisting architectural students have been gratifying," Rose said. "However, a continuing replenishment of funds will be needed each year until our net worth reaches a point at which our income can support our tuition grants."

Gerald Rice, member of the Foundation's Board of Directors, pointed out that the Foundation's assets amounting to about $4,000.00 were invested in building and loan stock. Rice urged that every opportunity be taken by architects to acquaint persons in the building industry with the Foundation's purposes and called attention to the tax deductible nature of contributions to the Foundation.

School Administrators View Architects' Exhibit

Twenty mounts submitted by eight offices gave Wisconsin school administrators an eye-opening view of the product of members of the Wisconsin Architects Association at a recent exhibition in Madison.

Planned by the Exhibitions and Honor Awards Committee the exhibits were placed on display in the lobby of the University of Wisconsin Memorial Union for the Wisconsin Annual Joint Conference of School Administrators and Superintendents.

The brunt of the work in preparing the display of the exhibits was assumed by Madison members of the Committee and their office staffs assisted by the Wisconsin Historical Society.

Offices which submitted exhibits were: Ebling, Plunkett & Keymar, Milwaukee; Edgar Stubenrauch & Associates, Sheboygan; Irion & Reinke, Oshkosh; Fritz von Grossmann, Milwaukee; Durrant & Berquist, Dubuque; Siberz, Purcell & Cuthbert, Madison; Weiler & Strang, Madison; John J. Flad & Associates, Madison.

"Architecture and Science Must Join"

--*Buckminster Fuller*

Buckminister Fuller, left, principle speaker at the North Central States Regional Conference, Rochester, Minnesota, chats with Allen Strang of Madison, Wisconsin.

Speaking with easy humor and obvious sincerity, R. Buckminster Fuller addressed the North Central States Regional Conference of the American Institute of Architects on October 28, calling upon them to "recognize our task and our responsibility to society".

Commenting on man's tremendous technological progress in recent years, Fuller said, "Man can do anything he wants. He has probed the secrets of the energy of the universe and he had better be wise. It is up to us to lead in the architecture of our new technology."

Fuller, who replaced the originally announced speaker, Frank Lloyd Wright, humorously described the change in the attitude of his audiences over a period of some years.

"Twenty-five to thirty years ago when I spoke about light weight structures and the Dymaxion theory people were sure that none of these designs ever would be actually used and so they could afford to be amused. Later on as other new ideas became accepted some doubt crept in as to whether my ideas were practical and, consequently, the audience didn't know whether to be amused or not.

"I feel easy now for the first time in speaking before architects because now the ideas I have fostered for many years and the designs I have created actually are being built."

Specifically Fuller referred to radomes which are used to house radar installations for the Air Force, advance base structures for the Marine Corps and the dome which he was commissioned to construct to cover the open area in the center of the Ford Rotunda in Detroit.

Fuller credited his early interest in light weight structures to early experience as a builder and Naval officer. In these capacities he was troubled and exasperated by the heavy weight of most structures. He continually was plagued by small hatches on board ship through which bulky heavy items must pass. Our small trucks on small highways never seemed adequate to handle conventional building materials.

Knowing of aircraft builders' preoccupation with light but strong structures, he began experimenting in 1927. He implied the culmination of these experiments occured with the building of the Ford Rotunda Dome. The Dome had long been a dream of Henry Ford, Senior, but the building would not stand the 180-ton weight of a dome constructed in the conventional fashion. It was Henry Ford II who became interested in Fuller's ideas and willing to back them. The building was determined to be easily strong enough to stand the weight of the 8½-ton Geodesic created by Fuller.

Some consideration Fuller said was half seriously given to completing the structure on the ground and lifting it into place with a team of helicopters. "Another idea we considered was to float it into place with gas-filled balloons". Fuller then described the central mast which was placed in the center of the Rotunda and jacked up as the construction of the Dome was completed.

"Only nine months later," Fuller said, "after experiments with the Marine Corps we would definitely have tried to use helicopters in its erection."

In describing his most recent experiments with the Marine Corps, Fuller stated that technological improvements in airplane design had revealed heretofore overlooked problems. Combat airports were shrinking in size. Vertical takeoff aircraft required only a very limited space. Helicopters similarly needed very little room in which to take off and land. Experiments with land-based arrester gear of the type used on carriers indicated the possibility of shorter runways for conventional fixed-wing aircraft.

All this shortened drastically the building time for airstrips.

Fuller pointed out that during World War II airstrips took a considerable length of time to build and caused tremendous logistic problems because of the dead

(Continued on next page)

Capsule Biography

R. Buckminster Fuller
Born 1895, Milton, Massachusetts
Attended Milton Academy and Harvard

Expelled from Harvard University for blithe revolt against mid-term examinations as invasion of the right of private thinking. Ideas and thoughts since that date directed primarily in revolt against conventional thinking and applied toward technological progress.

Graduate World War I Special Short Course at U. S. Naval Academy. Served as Naval Officer.

Visiting Professor at the University of Michigan, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Princeton, North Carolina State, University of Minnesota, and Cornell University. Also currently connected with a research and development firm known as Geodesics, Inc., with offices in Raleigh, North Carolina, and Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Described as Inventor, Engineer, Philosopher, Designer and Author.

weight of the materials used. In this mass of building activity the large weight of building materials required by hangars and maintenance shops to support the air strip and the length of time to erect them, pretty generally went unnoticed because of the length of time required to build the strip itself.

As this realization became apparent, the quick creation of maintenance buildings took on high priority and the air lifting of the necessary structures in and out of the operating area came under serious consideration. Fuller, as the man who had been concerned for many years with the reduction of weight in building construction, was asked by the Marine Corps to survey the problem and make recommendations. As Visiting Professor to the staff of various colleges, he made it a project of many of his senior and graduate students. Although final decisions have not yet been made, primarily because the Marine Corps has not yet decided upon the size of structure desired, it would now seem, Fuller stated, that light weight structures composed of a web of metal, will provide the answer to many problems. "I have seen 50-foot hangars air lifted in 35 mph winds (their design created a minimum drag) without difficulty by Sikorsky medium helicopters which can lift 1600 lbs. It is my belief that the air lift of a 100-foot diameter hangar will come soon."

Going back to the Ford Rotunda dome for a moment, Fuller pointed out that the scaffold for the dome cost more than the dome itself and in defense of his half-serious thought at the time of having helicopters do the lifting for the job, he noted he could have bought two helicopters for the price of the scaffold, had them fly prefabricated sections into place and, upon completion of the job, he would have had the helicopters still available for further work, whereas the scaffold had to be completely cut away and destroyed. He stated he now realized he could have put up the dome with 14 passes of the helicopter and completed it in two days.

Fuller indicated the realization of his theories and their translation into actual buildings opened new avenues of thought. He stated he had confined most of his thinking to small structures, but believes now that the application of his theories to larger buildings will come. Fuller cautioned he did not believe he was announcing anything catacylsmic in a delination of his theories. He stated the old safe ways of building construction still were good. He emphasized, however, that we are in a period of transition and urged the younger men in the profession to invest carefully their hours of preparation so they might be able to accept new as well as old and proven techniques.

"Architecture, instead of being an accessory after the fact, actually is leading and should take the initiative to see how the resources, now nearly available, can best be used for society's improvement."

"Architecture must join in teamwork with the scientist to investigate the tremendous resources which are now available to produce the greatest potential man has ever known," Fuller concluded.

Lens Lineup . . .

Above: Wisconsin representatives at the North Central States Regional Conference enjoy a post-seminar point with panel members. Left to right: Joseph Weiler, Talbot Jones, Allen Strang, and R. W. Law.

Above left: Wisconsin architects and their ladies at a Regional Conference luncheon. Left to right: Fritz and Mrs. von Grossmann, Joseph Weiler, Julius and Mrs. Sandstedt, Mrs. Edgar Berners, and Allen Strang.

Left: The Exhibitions and Honor Awards Committee at work includes left to right: Maurey Lee Allen, Wallace R. Lee, Jr., Theodore H. Irion, Thomas H. Flad, Chairman Mark Purcell, Frederick Schweitzer, Austin A. Fraser, and Robert J. Van Lanen.

Members of the opening panel are congratulated by Fritz von Grossmann. Left to right are Brooks Cavin, A.I.A., Charles D. Wiley, Philip Will, Jr., F.A.I.A., Herman Gutman, and von Grossmann.

Seminar No. 1

"The Architect as the Coordinator"

Moderator: Philip Will, Jr., Architect, F.A.I.A., Perkins and Will, Chicago.

Panel: Brooks Cavin, Architect, A.I.A., Brooks Cavin, St. Paul. Herman Gutman, Architect, Project Coordinator, Victor Gruen Assoc., Inc., Los Angeles. Charles D. Wiley, Chief of Design, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, Chicago.

The first seminar set the theme of the entire North Central States Regional Conference of the American Institute of Architects. Upon it all the other seminars depended.

The impact of modern technological and swiftly-moving improved construction techniques were listed by Philip Will as tending to splinter the building industry. Consultants of various kinds, he said, had appeared; materials dealers and consultants for design had entered the field, package builders and building by government units blurred the picture. All of these elements tend to reduce the importance of the architect in the building field. Will stated some architects sought legislation to reverse this trend. Will called legislation "a very papery shield". Instead, Will said architects must meet the challenge and demands imposed by society and by changing technology by really being a "coordinator".

Herman Gutman, whose firm was described as being representative of one which carried coordination to a high degree, said that he employed experts from all over the country to survey all aspects of their jobs and that their primary policy was to keep quiet and let the experts talk.

Charles D. Wiley stated that each of his firm's four offices were autonomous; that the Chicago office was almost self-sufficient, having a complete staff of electrical, structural, and other engineers, and designers. The project manager, he said, serves under the "designer-architect" who is ultimately responsible for the finished structure. The New York, San Francisco and Portland offices of these firms employ outside consultants to a large degree.

Brooks Cavin described the operation of his smaller office and stated he used outside consulting engineers almost entirely. He stated this required the spending of a good deal of time finding out the resources of his area from the standpoint of good consultants and craftsmen who were able to follow through well. He stated that only by knowing the techniques, capabilities, and limitations of the craftsmen employed, could he do the total job.

As a sidelight, a brief discussion was held relative to the merits of the individual architect being associated in a very large firm as against a small one. Representatives of the larger firms pointed out as advantages the capability for doing very large jobs of almost any character, but cited as a disadvantage the loss of personal satisfaction through the necessary splitting up of responsibility.

Gutman in this regard noted that the large firm was strictly a team operation, that all of the team's elements must be kept happy and there was a lack of feeling of individual accomplishment.

Joe Weiler asked whether the panel believed the architect should sell his services primarily as a coordinator rather than as a technician in any field — this to exclude design. Gutman stated this decision depended upon the project, but said, "certainly the architect is a better coordinator than any other element of the building industry".

In reply to a question as to whether a young architect should specialize, Gavin stated he preferred the excitement of general practice. He further stated there was a need for both the little frog and the big frog, but that the decision depended much on the individual's interest and capabilities. He recommended to architectural students that they go from one office to another for some years before beginning individual practice. He stated a great deal could be learned in this fashion even if the young man does not particularly like the finished work of the firm for which he is working.

Will summed up the panel's discussion by stating that architects ceased to be architects when we cease to be deserving. He stated we must add to our functions that of the coordinator. Will concluded, "There is need for overall leadership in solving the client's problems. It devolves upon us as architects to fulfill that need or others will. We must develop our own competence wherever possible, and fill in with that of others where we deem it necessary."

Seminar No. 5

"Building Type Consultants"

Moderator: Edgar H. Berners, Architect, F.A.I.A., Foeller, Schober, Berners, Safford & Jahn, Green Bay, Wisconsin.

Panel: Albert F. Heino, Architect, A.I.A., Albert F. Heino & Assoc., Chicago. A. Reinhold Melander, Architect, A.I.A., A. Reinhold Melander, Duluth. Major General Philip C. Bettenburg, Architect, A.I.A., Bettenburg, Townsend & Stolte, St. Paul.

Introduced by the moderator, Edgar H. Berners, Albert F. Heino stated some persons believe the architect to be retrogressing, that he had moved down from the "master builder" to "office boy to the specialists". Stating that the practice of architecture always has required specialization, Heino stated the architect must appraise his limitations.

"He is not the master, but he should be the leader," Heino said. "You cannot legislate leadership. You must prove it to the clients and to society."

Clearly defining the position of the consultant, Heino said architects must get consultants to work for them not against them. Too often the architect, he warned, becomes merely a sort of sub-contractor for a lay consultant employed by the owner.

Placing the responsibility squarely on the architect, Heino said the consultant should be hired by the architect, that consultation should be between the architect and consultant, and that decisions should be made by the architect.

Heino suggested a proper air of confidence between owner and architect will help make this possible. Heino warned, however, that there were quacks in the consultant field and urged complete study of the qualifications of any consultant not well known to the architect.

Admitting that certain work gravitates to architectural firms which do specialized jobs, Heino called upon all architects to help each other.

"Architects are not competitors," Heino insisted. "No one architect can do work exactly like another. We are chosen because of the character of the work we have done or can do for the client."

Emphasizing that a mistake by any architect returns to give the entire profession a black eye, Heino pleaded for the cooperation of all architects in boosting the profession and helping each other whenever possible. He strongly demanded no criticism of any architect by another practitioner.

Speaking primarily of hospital architecture, A. Reinhold Melander recommended that an architect with a small practice or with no hospital experience, if he obtained a hospital commission, definitely should have consultants or associate himself with an architect who has such experience. He stated the consultant, while he has a place in the scheme of things, should be watched carefully so that he does not attempt to take over the legitimate work of an architect.

Major General Philip C. Bettenberg emphasized the responsibility of the architect to the client particularly in the matter of school construction.

"We owe the owner," he said, "the responsibility to obtain for him the best possible advice and experience. The average architect, or even groups of architects, cannot be expert in every field. We must look for help sometimes even from outside the architectural field."

"After all, the architect's is the responsibility — recognized by law — to be in charge and he should be just that."

Commenting upon whom should employ the consultant, Bettenberg indicated that often the consultant was on the job first but that in any case he believed once a selection had been made, the architect should be the only one to consult with the owner. He warned frequently surveys by consultants resulted in the consultant's seeking to impose his views on both the architect and the client.

In response to a question from the floor as to whether an architect should charge a fee for consultation with another architect, Heino strongly stated his belief that advice by an architect to an architect should be without fee if it can be done without cost to the giver of the advice.

"If we can help each other to avoid mistakes and to build better buildings, we will all benefit," he concluded.

A pre-panel strategy conference is held by left to right: Edgar H. Berners, F.A.I.A., and A.I.A. members Albert H. Heino, A. Reinhold Melander and Maj. Gen. Philip C. Bettenburg.

EDITOR'S NOTE (cont.)

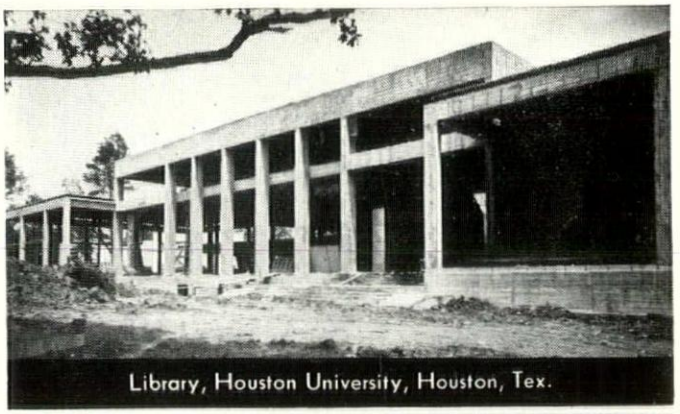
The magazine's policy will continue to be one of service to the Wisconsin Architects Association and to the advertisers in this magazine. It is hoped it will be a sound vehicle for the exchange of ideas vital to any group with a common interest. This exchange will be achieved through the editorial columns, and through advertising — for much of the advertising of today's aggressive, dynamic building industry is instructive, thought-provoking.

As the new magazine grows, "dependents" will take shape such as this issue's "To Fill You In" and "Lens Lineup". Plans for materials suppliers news are being laid.

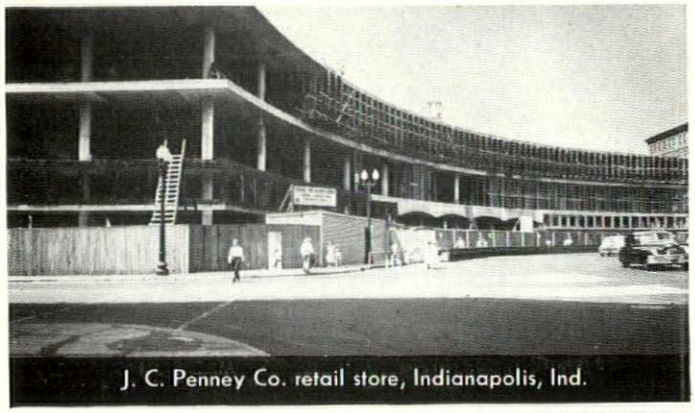
ARCHITECT WANTED

UNIVERSITY ARCHITECT — Assist in campus planning; do considerable liaison and consulting work. Write specifications; make preliminary drawings for new structures and working drawings for remodeling; supervise construction. Good opportunity for increased responsibility. Wisconsin registration preferred. Write A. F. Gallistel, Director, Physical Plant Planning, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Factory and salesroom, Olson Rug Co., Chicago

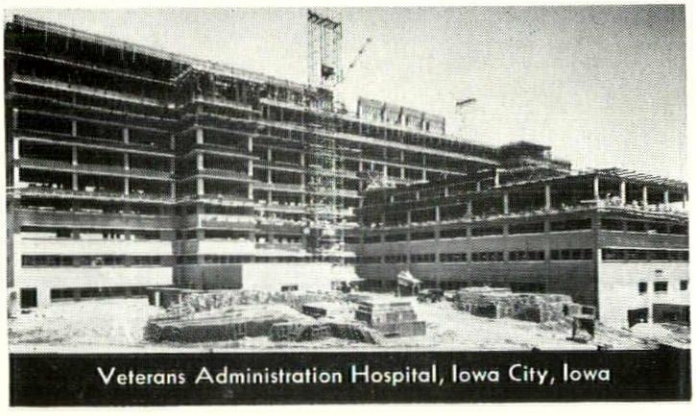


Library, Houston University, Houston, Tex.

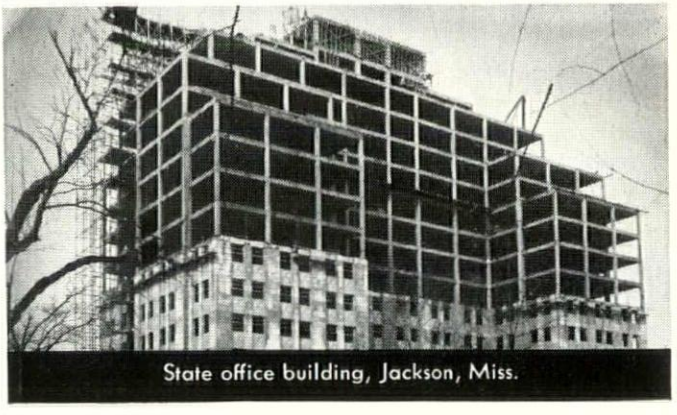


J. C. Penney Co. retail store, Indianapolis, Ind.

Marcy apartment houses, Brooklyn, N. Y.



Veterans Administration Hospital, Iowa City, Iowa



State office building, Jackson, Miss.

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